1:Du Bois E-5 (1938-1939) 1944
OFS Alor OFS

333 177 One source of status and distinction is not included on a current list of minor skills; that is, bravery in war. Before the pacification of the island by the Hollanders a man might gain distinction through wealth or warfare. Today only wealth remains. For the successful warrior a special status term exists that means essentially a "killer," a "bad man" (*ikle*). Seers also have a special status term (*dimang*).

359 At present in Atimelang only two men are definitely at the nonprivileged end of the scale. One is a man about forty years old who has never married and never distinguished himself in any way. The other is a young simpleton who still associates with boys and is a docile servitor to his elder kin. Otherwise, even outsiders and poor men are to some extent involved, or hoping to become involved, in the competitive system. Perhaps this is one reason, combined with others, that skills are on so low a level in the community. The foregoing list of people known [361] for special abilities indicates the poverty of the range. It does not, however, indicate the triviality of the reward. Such skills may serve to identify their possessors, but little more. They are not substitutes for wealth, and the power they give over other people is minimal. They may arouse a modicum of respect but they give no true prestige.

734 383 The seer has opportunities for wielding social power, but that power, though real, is covert. The payments he gets for curing are so small that they serve only as a supplementary source of income. His position is reminiscent of the more academic sciences in our culture, whose power is indirect and whose reward financially is not comparable to that of a "captain of industry." In the autobiographies are the histories of two seers, a man and a woman. I have the impression that they are both people with a considerable desire for power who are using the role of seer to inflate their own image of themselves because the [illegible] role is largely blocked. Rilpada's life history and dreams deserve special study from that point of view.

461 It could be argued that such substitutive gratifications might be expected to flourish in a society where the cultural goal is so often associated with frustrations and difficulties. That they do not may be symptomatic of a general underdevelopment of mastery techniques. It is patent that in practically all specialties there is a singular slovenliness of achievement. Maikaliera, who is listed as a man distinguished for gardening, planted a field far too large for his labor resources for weeding it. A careful study I made of his expenditures in gardening feasts and of his returns revealed that he had lost out in the enterprise, although he did not seem aware of the fact.

Carvings of village guardian spirits, familiars, and the like are all

1:Du Bois E-5 (1938-1939) 1944
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juncture in certain aspects of his life. He comes fairly close to the characteristics of certain neuroses in Western society.

He is about thirty-six, the middle of five siblings, and is married to a woman ten years older, who has two daughters by a previous marriage. He has no children. He is a seer, and has some standing but little wealth. Physically he is blind in one eye, is crippled and emaciated, and has an irritating skin disease. He is a dreamer and an interpreter of dreams.

His father, now dead, was a prominent seer who had risen from the position of a slave child by dint of persistence and enterprise. His father is the dominant influence in Rilpada's life. The son not only follows his father's vocation of seer, but he is constantly occupied with the latter's finances rather than his own. He takes pride in his father's sexual prowess in having had nine wives. Rilpada is the offspring of his father's second marriage. His mother is still living.

The case of Rilpada's autobiography differs notably from that of the others. We are dealing here with a contemporary picture that differs strikingly from the childhood picture. Also, Rilpada's story differs from the c[illegible]rs in emphasis. Wherein the general cultural picture is the same in his case as in the others, he insists upon giving a picture of good care in childhood. He felt the influence of both maternal care and paternal guidance, and both seem to have been intelligent and directed. The evidence for this is that he is actively partisan, now toward his mother, now toward his father. He recounts plenty of quarrels with both, but always adds a forgiving note, indicating that both his parents made persistent efforts to placate him and understand his feelings. He is always reconciled to them, and his story abounds in episodes of gratitude [illegible] for them. His earliest recollection, one of grabbing and spoiling a rice cake that his mother had prepared, is followed by the comment, "She told me not to do that, and gave me a coconut dish with rice that was left in the pot." It is natural, therefore, to find that he behaves the same way toward his friends, with whom there are plenty of fights but always rapid reconciliations.

Only in the case of women are Rilpada's reactions true to the cultural type—and even worse, for he has a decided neurosis on this score. There is some likelihood of his being impotent, though his childlessness cannot be taken as evidence to support this, since he is married to a woman now forty-five. There are indications of shyness toward women; he runs away from them and finally marries one whose chief virtue is that she can work well and be a good caretaker—a replica of the desired mother figure.